

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 02280 200839Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 USIA-06 /021 W

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R 200753Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7368

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2280

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT,UR,US

SUBJECT: AKSENOV SAYS HE WILL CREATE "SCANDAL" IF TRIP
TO U.S. NOT AUTHORIZED.

REFS (A) MOSCOW 19192 (B) STATE 014185 (C) MOSCOW 2041

1. SOVIET WRITER VASILY AKSENOV TOLD EMBOFF
FEBRUARY 19 THAT HE WAS GETTING RUN-AROUND FROM
UNION OF WRITERS RE INVITATION TO TEACH SEMINAR AT
UCLA DURING SPRING TERM (REFTELS). AKSENOV SAID
WRITERS UNION CHAIRMAN FEDORENKO HAD RECENTLY TOLD HIM
THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO WRITE OUT TEXT OF LECTURES TO BE GIVEN AT
SEMINAR BEFORE HE COULD RECEIVE AUTHORIZATION FOR
VISIT. AKSENOV REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD TAKE SEVERAL
MONTHS AND THAT IN ANY CASE SEMINAR WAS TO HAVE
INFORMAL STRUCTURE WITHOUT SET LECTURES. HE OFFERED
TO GIVE UNION OUTLINE OF HIS PLANS FOR SEMINAR AND
TO TAPE RECORD SEMINAR SESSIONS SO UNION COULD
CHECK SUBSTANCE LATER. HE ALSO OFFERED TO TURN OVER
BULK OF SALARY OF \$10,000 HE IS TO RECEIVE, SINCE
VISIT ITSELF IS MORE IMPORTANT TO HIM THAN MONEY
INVOLVED. AKSENOV HAS NOT YET HAD A RESPONSE FROM
UNION AND SAID HE SENSED UNION OFFICIALS WERE TRYING
TO STALL IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT TIME WOULD NOT
PERMIT HIM TO ACCEPT OFFER. HE ALSO SAID THAT IF
HE DID NOT RECEIVE AUTHORIZATION SOON, HE PLANNED TO
WRITE TO AND THEN CALL AT "CENTRAL COMMITTEE" TO
APPEAL CASE. IF THIS DID NOT WORK, AKSENOV
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PLANS TO MAKE BIG "SCANDAL."

2. COMMENT: AKSENOV IS WELL KNOWN ENOUGH TO CREATE CAUSE CELEBRE, PARTICULARLY IF HE GETS IN TOUCH WITH WESTERN PRESS. FACT THAT HIS MOTHER SPENT 17 YEARS IN STALINIST PRISON CAMPS AND WROTE OF HER EXPERIENCES IN BOOK PUBLISHED ONLY IN WEST ADDS TO DRAMA OF CASE. END COMMENT.

3. PRESS AND CULTURAL COUNSELOR HAS APPOINTMENT FEBRUARY 20 WITH A.M. DYUZHEV, CHIEF OF FOREIGN RELATIONS IN MINISTRY OF CULTURE (WHICH HANDLES UNION OF WRITERS' FOREIGN RELATIONS), AND WILL MENTION OUR INTEREST IN AKSENOV'S TRIP TO U.S. AT THAT TIME. STOESEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WRITERS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW02280
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750060-0565
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750228/aaaaayqc.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MOSCOW 19192, 75 STATE 014185, 75 MOSCOW 2041
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AKSENOV SAYS HE WILL CREATE "SCANDAL" IF TRIP TO U.S. NOT AUTHORIZED.
TAGS: PINT, OTRA, UR, US, (AKSENOV, VASILY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006